

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

STR-04 CEA-01 AGRE-00 ITC-01 ACDA-07 /121 W

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7026

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USUN NEW YORK 668

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 1145

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, EGEN, CE

SUBJ: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: SRI LANKA VIEWS ON ECONOMIC ISSUES
AT NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

REF: (A) STATE 068014; (B) STATE 066512; (C) STATE 064158;
(D) COLOMBO 0844 (NOTAL)

1. AT MARCH 29 MEETING WITH LEELANANDA DE SILVA, SENIOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, EMBOFFS PASSED ON USG VIEWS ON CIEC AND COMMON FUND (REFTELS A AND B) AND MADE POINTS ON FORTHCOMING NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING (NACCFM) PROVIDED REFTEL C.

2. DE SILVA SAID THAT GIVEN APPARENT COOL ATTITUDE OF NEW INDIAN GOVERNMENT TOWARD NAM AND FACT THAT 25 NACC MEMBERS ARE GENERALLY MORE CONSERVATIVE AND AFFLUENT NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES,
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HE THOUGHT NACCFM WOULD BE LOW KEY AND HARDLY WORTH HOLDING. CONSEQUENTLY, HE EXPECTED NACCFM WOULD BE FAR LESS CONFRONTATIONAL THAN COLOMBO SUMMIT LAST AUGUST. BOTH COMMON FUND AND CIEC WOULD BE TOPICS OF DISCUSSION, BUT DE SILVA THOUGHT NEITHER ONE WOULD GENERATE MUCH HEAT.

3. HE SAID REPORTS FROM SRI LANKA AMBASSADOR TO GENEVA IN-

DICATE COMMON FUND NEGOTIATIONS ARE NOT GOING WELL, BUT THIS NOT SURPRISING AS MANY NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SRI LANKA, EXPECTED THESE TALKS TO FAIL. DE SILVA EXPRESSED VIEW THAT MANY OF 25 NACC MEMBERS NOT ANXIOUS TO SEE COMMON FUND OR OTHER UNCTAD INITIATIVES SUCCEED. WHILE SRI LANKA PUBLICLY SUPPORTS FUND, AND PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE HAS PROPOSED LDC'S ESTABLISH THEIR OWN FUND IF UNCTAD TALKS FAIL, (REFTEL D), DE SILVA POINTED OUT THAT COMMON FUND NOT REALLY THAT IMPORTANT TO SRI LANKA. WITH OR WITHOUT FUND, RUBBER AGREEMENT WILL BE CONCLUDED SOON, WHILE THERE NOT LIKELY TO BE A TEA AGREEMENT FOR SOME TIME. IF COMMON FUND NEGOTIATIONS DO FAIL, HOWEVER, DE SILVA THOUGHT THIS WOULD STRENGTHEN PAKISTAN'S HAND IN PRESSING FOR THIRD WORLD SUMMIT.

4. ACCORDING TO DE SILVA, NACC MEMBERS WILL BE MORE INTERESTED IN CIEC, BUT EVERYONE IS WAITING TO SEE WHAT COMES OUT OF MINISTERIAL MEETING AT END OF MAY. SRI LANKA IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT ANY REAL RESULTS FROM CIEC BUT HAS NOT YET WRITTEN IT OFF. DE SILVA SAID SRI LANKA'S RAPID ACCUMULATION OF DEBT IN PAST SEVERAL YEARS HAS INCREASED ITS INTEREST IN SOME FORM OF DEBT RESCHEDULING.

5. AT NACCFM SRI LANKA PLANS TO SUBMIT DRAFT RESOLUTION ON IMPORT POOLING OF PHARMACEUTICALS. UNDER PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT, DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WOULD JOIN TOGETHER TO PURCHASE LARGE LOTS OF PHARMACEUTICALS WITH CONSIDERABLE FOREIGN EXCHANGE SAVINGS. IF PHARMACEUTICAL POOLING SUCCESSFUL, THEN SIMILAR ARRANGEMENTS FOR OTHER COMMODITIES WOULD BE TRIED.

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6. REGARDING PROPOSALS FOR THIRD WORLD BANK AND CURRENCY UNIT PUT FORWARD BY PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE AT COLOMBO SUMMIT, DE SILVA DOUBTED BANK WOULD BE SUBJECT FOR EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION AT NACCFM. HE SAID THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER NACCFM HE WOULD BE GOING TO GENEVA FOR SIX WEEKS TO DO FEASIBILITY STUDY ON BANK FOR UNCTAD. HE DID NOT THINK CURRENCY UNIT, WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS A "BRAIN WAVE" OF FINANCE MINISTER FELIX BANDARANAIKE, WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT ALL.

7. EMBOFFS BRIEFLY REVIEWED USG POSITIONS ON NORTH KOREA AND PUERTO RICO. DE SILVA WAS FULLY AWARE OF USG VIEW ON THESE TWO ISSUES AND DID NOT THINK NACCFM WOULD TAKE A HARD LINE ON EITHER QUESTION.

8. DE SILVA GAVE EMBOFFS SET OF TEN WORKING PAPERS FOR NACCFM WHICH WERE PREPARED BY VARIOUS COUNTRIES' UN DELEGATIONS IN NEW YORK, TWO COPIES OF WHICH ARE BEING AIR POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT (IO/ML) AND ONE SET TO NEW DELHI. HE SAID PAPERS WERE POORLY DONE AND WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO MEETING.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Drafter: n/a
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